

Some tremendously exciting big country climbs have been put up this year, starting with *Renaissance* on Du Toit's Peak. This 500m route at 'G2' and 'M4' contains the most serious mechanical climbing done to date. Opened by Tony Dick and Dave Cheesmond, it pieced together various attempts to claim this line to the left of the classic NW face. *The times they are a changin* was pushed up the fabled Klein Winterhoek amphitheatre by Cheesmond, Lacey, Lomax and Gross with one bivouac and using quite an amount of mechanical aid. Hutchinson's Buttress also yielded a direct route with some delicate 'G1' leads on its sun-catching amphitheatre to Butch de Bruin, Dick and Cheesmond. With Duncan McLachlan in addition, this team used all the blank rock below *Lucifer* in Duiwel's Kloof, and opened *Dinosaur Revival*; so named as the leader has to stick his neck out quite a bit. Also in Duiwel's Kloof, Hans Graafland's parties opened 4 climbs of moderate grade ('E/F'), all over 350m long—an amazing breakthrough in this region of hard routes. *Pisa Direct* on the Witteberg was worried at by several parties until De Bruin and Cheesmond cracked it. On the other side of the valley, Cheesmond and Dick teamed up again to open *Time Warp* on the Yellowwood Amphitheatre. This 'G' route utilizes a pendulum traverse and some desperately thin climbing. The route is fairly intricate and a strong party attempting a repeat failed to find the pitches.

Finally, in the Cedarberg, Cheesmond and Gross put up some daring lines on the overhangs opposite Spout Cave, while Fletcher and Hartley did an eliminate on the Spout called *Where Eagles Dare*. The mechanical climbing on this was engineered by Hartley, who was responsible also for getting Lomax to hold the rope for him while he put up a 3-day mechanical climb on Table Mountain, called *One flew over the Cuckoo's nest*. On the Wolfberg Cracks ramparts Andre Schoon, son Alistair, Pete du Preez and Geoff Ward opened fine climbing lines of moderate grade ('F2') on good rock. As it proved an excellent new area for climbing, Robin Barley and Dave Davies were soon there, and blitzed up some desperately thin lines on very compact rock. *Celestial Journey* climbs superb crack lines and totally blank faces at 'G2' and aid, while *Satisfaction Guaranteed* holds some exciting 'G1' jamming in a crack around a bulge blocking a prominent recess.

In SW Africa, Eckhard Haber on tour found a few new areas of rock, which yielded interesting climbing. The Bradberg, long famed for its bogey of heat and waterlessness, did not deter several parties, including Haber's, from making ascents. In the Drakensberg, the only events have been Richard Smithers and Mike Roberts' ascents of some of the hard routes put up by Dick and Fuggle, such as their ridge on the Sentinel.

Not forgetting Woman's Lib—Romy Druschke became the first girl to do *Armageddon*, which is still probably the hardest climb in the Transvaal.

ASIA

HINDU KUSH

Koh e Shkhwir (7116m) Polish parties completed 2 new lines on this mountain in August 1977. Lwow, Pietkiewicz and Wielicki climbed the 3000m N wall by the left hand pillar and Kulis, Waclaw and Wilkonski the right hand pillar of the same wall (see p 172).

Tirich Mir West 4 (7338m) was climbed by an Italian party in July 1977 by a new route on the 1200m SW face. Calcagno, Enzo and Tomasi reached the summit on 21 July and on the following day Vidoni made a solo ascent.

Noshaq (7492m) A Czech woman, Dina Sterbova, soloed the main and W summit in August 1977. Her companion, Marta Melzochova, was hurt in an incident with bandits and had to remain in hospital in Kabul. It was an altitude record for a Czech woman climber.

Kebak Region The 6-man Manchester University Hindu Kush Expedition led by Richard Eastwood climbed in this region in July and August 1977. They made 12 ascents in lightweight style, including 8 previously unclimbed peaks. The most significant ascents were KZ75 (Qalat; 5400m, solo climb by J. Vogel, N ridge and N face), KZ88 (5250m, A. Hamilton and I. Grace, steep N ice-face) and KZ92 (Sare Kalan; 5650m, R. Thomas, J. Vogel and I. Nightingale, sustained 3-day rock-climb, NE face).



113 Pk 6401 from the Rishikot glacier (This and next 2 photos: D. Mill)

KARAKORAM

K2 (8611m) The British Expedition led by Chris Bonington ended in tragedy when Nick Estcourt was swept away to his death in an avalanche—only a broken rope prevented Doug Scott and a porter from suffering a similar fate. The small expedition, which had also been struck by Tony Riley and Paul Braithwaite's illness abandoned the mountain after Estcourt's death (see 'In Memoriam', p 267).

Latok Group There have been several expeditions to this area in the last 2 seasons. The 1977 survey by Bergamaschi's party (*AJ* 83 238) reversed the heights of the 2 highest mountains of the Group; the names and heights are now Latok I (formerly II), 7143m; II (formerly I), 7077m; III, 6852m; IV, 6124m. An American team (George and Jeff Lowe, Mike Kennedy and Jim Donini) narrowly failed in an alpine attempt on the N ridge of I in summer 1978; bad weather and lack of food forced a retreat.

KASHMIR

Nanga Parbat (8126m) was climbed solo by Reinhold Messner on 9 August 1978 by a new line on the Diamir Face in 3½ days from Base Camp. The descent was delayed by storm and complicated by a new avalanche, and he returned to his Base Camp 12 days after leaving it—he was already presumed dead by this time. 1978 was an exceptional year for Messner even by his own high standards, including also of course his oxygen free ascent of Everest with Peter Habeler (see Nepal). An article on Nanga Parbat by Norman Dyrhenfurth appears in *Mountain* 59 18.

Brammah I (6146m) A joint City and Brunel University expedition climbed this mountain in 1978, Paul Belcher and Anthony Wheaton reaching the summit on 15 August. The 2 other expedition members, Duncan Nicholson and Jon Scott were lost on the descent (see p. 103).

KULU

Karcha Parbat (6270m) The Irish Himalayan Expedition made the first ascent of this mountain on 19 September 1977.



114 Pk 6401 from Changabang



115 Pk 6401 from Changabang glacier

Dibibokri Pyramid (6408m) Dick Hewitt writes that he and Mick Hoffe made the first ascent in September 1978, via the Dibibokri Col and the N face. They were members of a small party of 3, the third being Christine Mumford.

GARHWAL

Tharkot (6099m) was climbed by 24 members of a Japanese expedition in October 1977; the same number also climbed nearby Banoti (5645m). The leader, Makato Hara, had collected expedition members for training in acclimatization techniques and was able to take the party to 5950m within 5 days of arriving in the Himalaya.

Kalanka (6913m) The second ascent of this mountain was made by the Czechs J. Rakoncaj and L. Jon in 1977 by an impressive new route on the 1800m N face.

Nanda Devi Basin In 1977, Donald Mill writes that he and Hamish Brown and Stephen Simpson formed the nucleus of a successful lightweight expedition into the Basin under ideal post-monsoon conditions. The accompanying photographs show Peak 6401m, a fine granite summit, mentioned and illustrated by Doug Scott in *AJ* 80 158. It still offers a number of unclimbed lines, notably the N ridge, the NW face (both photo 1) and the E ridge direct from the Changabang Glacier (photos 2 and 3). The route by the SE ridge from the Changabang Glacier is straightforward apart from the difficult 150m granite step at the base of the summit cone. *Mountain* 61 30 contains an article on the Basin by Hamish Brown.

NEPAL

There have been a number of changes in regulations affecting mountaineers, following the 1977 shift of responsibility for climbing matters from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Tourism, which have been reported to us by Mike Cheney. Whereas previously a 'Mountaineering' Committee (with no practical experience) met a mere 2 or 3 times a year to consider applications, now, in theory, if a peak is on the permitted list and is not already 'occupied', then permission should follow without undue delay. How well the system operates in practice is perhaps too early to say—new bureaucratic systems often take a little while to operate smoothly.

A significant result of the change has been the appearance of a new list of permitted peaks which include 47 new peaks not on previous lists. There are in fact 4 different categories of peak. The first list is of peaks reserved for Nepalese climbers only. The second group is open to foreign expeditions only if Nepalese expeditions have made a first attempt or for expeditions containing perhaps a third of Nepalese members. The third list is an expanded version of the previous expedition list and the fourth contains lower peaks for tourist trekking and climbing holidays.

Of particular interest is the fourth list and the rules governing trekking which legalize a practice which has been occurring anyway. Permissions are granted on a first-come/first-served basis for a 2-week period initially which may be extended for a further 2 weeks on application. The fee is 315 rupees/person with a minimum of 4 persons for peaks over 20,000ft (6096m) and 2 persons for those below 20,000ft. Each party will have to have a sirdar/guide, to be paid a minimum of 30 rupees/day, plus food. Fuller details can be obtained from the Nepalese Mountaineering Association or from *Mountain*.

We reproduce below the 4 lists of peaks mentioned above—the list of mountains open for trekking is divided into 2 as indicated. It will be observed that the third list does not contain Gaurishankar which it had been hoped would be generally opened to foreign expeditions—the mountain is reserved for Nepalese expeditions (List B).

A Peaks opened for Nepalese expeditions only

No.	Name of the Peak	Height (in metres)	No.	Name of the Peak	Height (in metres)
1	Bhrikuti	6720	6	Gyachung Kang	7922
2	Chamar	7177	7	Jongsong	7473
3	Changla	6715	8	Keryolung	6681
4	Dorjo Lakpa	6990	9	Nala Kankar	6935
5	Gurja Himal	7193	10	Omi Kangri	7922

B Peaks opened for foreign expeditions after Nepalese teams or foreign expeditions containing Nepalese members have attempted them

1	Chamlang	7319	5	Ganesh Himal IV	7102
2	Ganesh Himal I	7406	6	Ganesh Himal V	6950
3	Ganesh Himal II	7150	7	Gaurishankar	7150
4	Ganesh Himal III	7132	8	Lamtrang Lirung	7246

C Peaks open for foreign expeditions

1	Ama Dablam	6856	27	Kangchenjunga	8598
2	Annapurna I	8091	28	Kangtoga	6809
3	Annapurna II	7937	29	Kanguru	6981
4	Annapurna III	7555	30	Kanjiroba	6882
5	Annapurna IV	7525	31	Lamjung Himal	6986
6	Annapurna S Peak	7218	32	Lhotse	8511
7	Api	7132	33	Makalu	8481
8	Baruntse	7220	34	Makalu II	
9	Baudha	6672		(Kangshungtse)	7640
10	Churen Himal	7375	35	Manaslu	8156
11	Dhampus	6836	36	Manaslu North	7157
12	Dhaulagiri I	8167	37	Nampa	6754
13	Dhaulagiri II	7751	38	Nilgiri Central	6940
14	Dhaulagiri III	7715	39	Nilgiri North	7032
15	Dhaulagiri IV	7661	40	Nilgiri South	6839
16	Dhaulagiri V	7618	41	Numbur	6954
17	Dhaulagiri VI	7268	42	Nuptse	7897
18	Everest (Sagarmatha)	8848	43	Mt Patrasi	6860
19	Fang	7647	44	Peak 29 (Dakura)	7835
20	Gangapurna	7454	45	Pumori	7145
21	Glacier Dome	7255	46	Putha Hiunchuli	7246
22	Himal Chuli	7864	47	Sisne	6945
23	Mt Jagdula	5785	48	Thamserku	6623
24	Jannu Himal	7710	49	Tilicho	7132
25	Kangara I	5960	50	Tukuche Peak	6920
26	Kangbachen	7902	51	Yalungkang	8502

D Peaks opened for trekking groups

Over 20,000ft (6096m)

1	Chulu East	6200	6	Kangde	6194
2	Chulu West	6630	7	Kusum Kangru	6369
3	Fluted Peak	6390	8	Lobuje	6119
4	Hiunchuli	6337	9	Mera Peak	6431
5	Island Peak	6153	10	Pharchamo	6282

Under 20,000ft (6096m)

1	Gangalachuli	5806	5	Pisang	6091
2	Mardi Himal	5586	6	Pokhalde	5806
3	Mehra Peak	5820	7	Ramdung	6021
4	Paldor Peak	5894	8	Tent Peak	5500

In a letter to *Mountain* (61 46) Mike Cheney stresses the need for applications to be complete when received in Nepal. The standard of applications received from Britain recently has apparently been low—not all necessary information has been provided and presentation has been poor. He points out that permission is given to complete applications on a first-come first-served basis, and that the date of receipt of an incomplete application does not serve to establish priority.

There is apparently no bias against small alpine style expeditions. However, climbing is expected to benefit the Nepalese economy, through employment of Nepalese and local sales of provisions and equipment. Registered 'expedition agents' will be encouraged to make all the necessary field arrangements for expeditions, eg finding reliable porters and camp staff.

As a result of breaches of the new regulations, leaders of 4 expeditions will not be given permits to enter Nepal for 3 years, or be allowed to climb for 5 years. In each case, the expedition climbed peaks for which permission had not been granted. Thus the Polish Kangchenjunga expedition climbed Kangchenjunga Central and South, the Spanish Yalung-kang expedition climbed Kangchenjunga Central; Japanese expeditions to Nampa and Himal Chuli climbed Nampa South and Himal Chuli West respectively. Initially it was stated that all members of these expeditions would be punished, but in the event, only the leaders have been banned.

Everest (8848m) One of the 1978 season's outstanding (and also controversial) events was Messner and Habeler's ascent of Everest by the original 1953 route without oxygen. Their claim was quickly followed by attempts to discredit it; they could not have made the climb from the South Col in the time stated (it appeared that this doubt was based on an incorrect report of the time, ie 6 hours instead of 9 to 10 hours); they had used oxygen carried by other members of the party (9 others reached the summit using oxygen, equalling the record number of climbers from one expedition); they carried a 'gun belt' of miniature oxygen cartridges; miniaturized cylinders were used etc. However, many of the claims were plainly silly, and there seems no doubt that climbers of the outstanding ability of this pair should be capable of making this ascent without oxygen, particularly under the favourable weather conditions prevailing and with the strong support from the remainder of the team. Messner's subsequent performance in soloing Nanga Parbat gives further proof, if any were needed, of his outstanding ability.

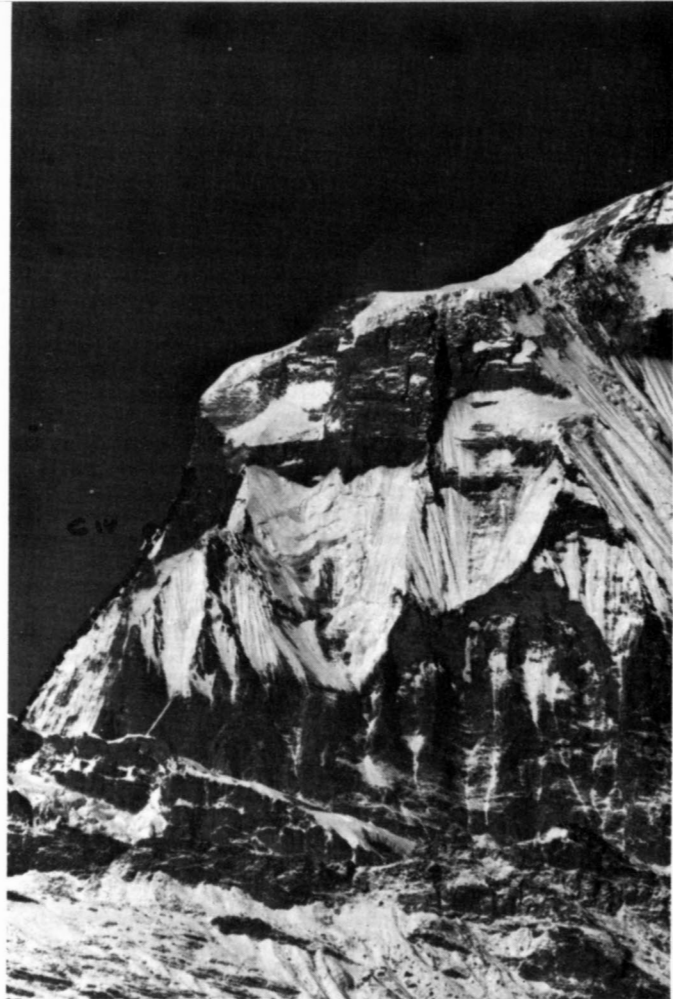
The German/French expedition led jointly by Dr Karl Herligkoffer and Pierre Mazeaud got 4 separate parties to the summit of Everest by the South Col route on 14, 15, 16 and 17 October 1978. Essentially there were 2 expeditions who however cooperated very successfully and maintained excellent relations throughout. In all, 16 people reached the summit including 7 Germans, 3 French, 1 Swiss, 1 Austrian, 3 Nepalese and the Polish woman, Wanda Rutkiewicz. Mazeaud, N. Jaeger and J. Afanassieff were the first Frenchmen to reach the summit of Everest.

The Chinese announced early in 1978 that they will allow a joint Chinese/Iranian expedition to climb Everest from the N side; precise dates were not given. This is an event of some significance, since foreign climbers have not been allowed into Tibet since the Chinese Communists took over.

Annapurna I (8091m) was successfully climbed by a Dutch expedition in October 1977—Mathuen van Rijswijk and Sonan Sherpa reached the summit by a line to the E of the Herzog route. It was the first time a Dutch party has scaled an 8000m peak, the first post-monsoon ascent and only the fourth ascent overall. The fifth ascent (by the same route as the Dutch) was made by the American Women's Himalayan Expedition in 1978, Vera Komarkova and Irene Miller reaching the summit with 2 Sherpas, the largest number ever to reach the top at once. However, tragedy struck afterwards as the second summit party, Vera Watson and Alison Chadwick Onyszkiewicz moved off from Camp 4 to Camp 5. They went out of sight just below Camp 5 and radio contact was lost. Since nothing was seen or heard the following day, Sherpas went up from Camp 2 and found the bodies, which could not be recovered, just below Camp 4. We are indebted to H. Adams-Carter for this information (see 'In Memoriam', p 271).

Annapurna II (7937m) Dick Isherwood writes that he and Rob Collister attempted a 2-man ascent post-monsoon in September 1978. They reached 7000m on the W ridge of Annapurna IV following the original route climbed by Jimmy Roberts's team in 1960; they had previously hoped to find a direct N face route but abandoned the idea because of the heavy covering of fresh snow. Deteriorating weather forced a retreat—however, they felt that another 3 days of fine weather would have given them a chance of reaching the summit.

Jannu (7710m) A 4-man party led by R. Carrington climbed Jannu, alpine style in October 1978, in 4½ days from the Yamatari Glacier by the South ridge.



*116 Dhaulagiri
(Photo: French
expedition)*

Dhaulagiri I (8167m) A Japanese team made the outstanding first climb of this mountain by the S Pillar, putting 6 men on the summit on 10 and 11 May 1978. A later French attempt in October, led by Yves Pollet-Villard, was defeated by bad weather (see accompanying photograph).

Lamtrang Lirung (7245m) D. F. O. Dangar writes that this mountain was climbed by a Japanese Nepalese expedition in October 1978, S. Wada and Sherpa Pemba Tsering reaching the summit. The mountain, locally known as Gangchhen Ledrub, is the highest summit of the Lamtrang (or Langtang) Himal. It was formerly called Dayabhang on the Survey of India maps and was later known as Langtrang Lirung (see *AJ* 69 287 for further information on this point).

There have been several unsuccessful attempts on the peak in the course of the last 20 years. In 1959, a Japanese expedition visited the Lamtrang Himal but the appearance of Gangchhen Ledrub was so forbidding that the expedition was content to climb its eastern neighbour, Tsangbu Ri, 6745m. Disaster overtook the Japanese spring expedition of 1961 when 2 Japanese and Gyaltsen Norbu were killed by an avalanche. This famous Sherpa had been with the French on Makalu in 1955 and next year with the Japanese on Manaslu; at the time of his death he was the only Sherpa who had climbed two 8000m peaks.

The Italian expedition in the autumn of 1963 met with no better success. One of the party was killed by falling ice and the expedition's doctor so badly hurt that he later died of his injuries.

Another unsuccessful attempt was made by a party from Osaka University in 1964 and in

the autumn of the same year Peter Taylor led a small party including 6 Sherpas on another attempt. They attacked the mountain from the W but on reaching a height estimated at 6700m the assault was abandoned on account of the difficulties of the route and the lack of experience of some of the party.

Kangchenjunga South (8490m) This satellite peak, previously the second highest unclimbed summit in the world, was climbed on 19 May 1978 by the Poles, W. Jorzwana and E. Chrobak. As mentioned earlier, the leader of the expedition has been banned from Nepal for a period, since the Nepalese maintain that permission had only been granted to climb Kangchenjunga itself.

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

We have no direct news of recent rock-climbing—what follows are some of the trends and highlights selected from the pages of the 1978 editions of *Mountain* where further details may be found.

It appears that a large concentration of unemployed climbers in Australia is active in Victoria; as a result, the number of routes and their standard are both rising dramatically as compared with other areas in the country. Mount Arapiles has been the centre of activity and recently saw the first grade 25 route achieved in Australia (by Chris Peisker after 3 days struggle to free *Dreadnought*); Arapiles already has more grade 24 routes than the rest of the country combined and a promised guide to the area is already out of date. Climbers have also been busy at Mount Buffalo where Australia's first 24 received second and third ascents from Greg Child and Mike Law on the same day.

Those active in Victoria have however strayed outside the borders of the State. Law, Child and Kim Carrigan repeated Barber's hardest routes in Tasmania and put up a large number of new 22 and 23 routes in a variety of locations in the island. In Queensland, Frog Buttress has seen a number of new 20–22 routes put up by Rick McGregor, Graeme Roxburgh and Fred From. Child and Law have been active in New South Wales; *The Wake of the Flood* (23) in the Blue Mountains and a number of 22 routes in Wirindi have resulted.

We have received a copy of *Mountaineering* 1978, the new annual journal of the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club, edited by Nicholas Reeves and Neil Blundy. This interesting first issue has a true Australasian flavour, with articles describing canoeing trips in Tasmania, the rarely visited Little River Gorge and ski touring in the Bluff–Howitt–Tamboritha area, both in Victoria, rock-climbing near Christchurch and a description of Earle's Route and a grand traverse of Mount Cook in New Zealand. It concludes with a comparative survey by Chris Baxter of climbing magazines available in Victoria; of necessity, Australians are to a large extent dependent on foreign magazines, albeit probably written in English, to keep abreast of climbing and mountaineering events in the rest of the world. There is some criticism that these journals do not adequately cover the Australasian scene. Whilst this is to some extent inevitable, it should be pointed out that this coverage must to a large extent be dependent on Australian and New Zealand climbers putting pen to paper and making their deeds known to the outside world—this journal would welcome such material, in article or note form.

NEW ZEALAND

In the summer of 1977, Paddy Freaney and Russel Brice succeeded in climbing all the 31 3000m peaks in the Southern Alps in one season. Previous premetrication attempts to climb all 27 10,000ft peaks in a season had always failed—however the pair climbed all the 30 peaks in the Mount Cook area in a 3-month period and finished off with Mount Aspiring in May.

Paul Scaife and Dave McNulty set themselves a huge task also, ie to climb the main divide from Mount Elie de Beaumont to Mount Sefton. This would have involved traversing 47 peaks of which 19 are over 3000m. In fact neither made it, McNulty giving it best at Harper Saddle after 34 peaks (18 three-thousanders) had been traversed. Scaife continued and finally descended only 5 peaks short of Sefton via the Copland pass.

The Darrans are becoming a major area of activity for hard rock men. Galen Rowell put up a number of 5.9 routes with local climbers which he compared with high standard climbs in Yosemite 5 years ago. Later in the year there were a number of first winter ascents. Merv